

	Washington Learns (SB 5441)	Early Learning Council (HB 1152)
<i>Intent</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The early years mark the most extraordinary period of growth for young children. The State's role in providing access to early learning has never been consistently defined.</li> <li>2) More than a quarter century has passed since the school finance system was first created. Challenges, goals and expectations for our schools have grown and changed dramatically.</li> <li>3) Demographics and workforce needs continue to increase demand for postsecondary education and training. Adult Basic Education and Literacy are foundations for employment for many people. Washington citizens deserve access to BA degree opportunities. Research conducted at universities and colleges contributes to economic and social well being of the state. Students pay an increasing cost of their education with tuition rising faster than personal income or inflation.</li> <li>4) Through a comprehensive study, the legislature will have solid information to determine how to best use resources to create a strong education system, an educated citizenry and a thriving economy.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Parents are their children's first and most important teachers, caregivers and decision makers. Many parents must seek services to assist with the care and support of their children. Welfare reform requires parents to enter the workforce, increasing the need for child care and support services. Parents need and deserve the best possible information to help inform their choices.</li> <li>2) Research on brain development establishes the importance of early experiences for children's emotional, social, physical and cognitive development. Research also shows the clear connections between the quality of early childhood care and education, and later success in school and life.</li> <li>3) Must build on the efforts of communities, including public/private partnerships, across the state to improve quality of early learning environments and information for families related to those environments. Statewide leadership is needed to guide and support efforts of the public and private sectors working together to improve quality, affordability, and accessibility to early learning opportunities.</li> <li>4) The legislature establishes an oversight body to provide leadership and vision to strengthen the quality of early learning services and programs for all children and families in the state and to ensure that children enter school ready to succeed.</li> </ol>

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<b>Definitions</b>		<p>"Early learning programs and services" include the following" Child care; state, private, and nonprofit preschool programs; child care subsidy programs; and training and professional development programs for early learning professionals.</p> <p>"Council" means the Washington Early Learning Council</p>
<b>Study/ Council Composition</b>	<p>Steering Committee consists of 13 members, as follows: Governor (chair); Director of OFM; one member from each major caucus in the house and senate, appointed by each caucus; four citizens appointed by the governor; and, the chairs of each of three advisory committees.</p> <p>Advisory Committee Chairs: Early Learning Committee Chair shall be the nongovernmental co-chair of the Early Learning Council; K-12 Committee Chair shall be the superintendent of public instruction; Higher Education Committee chair shall be selected by the governor from a list of names submitted by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Council of Presidents and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.</p> <p>Advisory Committee members: Members of the Early Learning Council shall serve as the advisory committee on early learning; Members of the K-12 and Higher Education advisory committees shall be appointed by the steering committee. In addition, each caucus shall appoint one member from each major caucus in the house and senate.</p>	<p>The Council serves as the Early Learning Advisory Committee under SB 5441. The Council is established in the Governor's office and shall consist of 17 members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointed by the governor: one representative each of the governor's office, Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Health, and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; two representatives each of private business and philanthropy; four individuals who have demonstrated leadership and engagement in the field of early learning (12)</li> <li>• One member from each major caucus in the house and senate, appointed by each caucus (4)</li> <li>• One representative of the office of the superintendent of public instruction, appointed by the SPI (1)</li> </ul> <p>The Council shall be co-chaired by the non-governmental representative and the governor's office representative (both appointed by the governor and included above).</p> <p>The council shall establish technical advisory committees as needed (including representatives from a list of agency and stakeholder groups specified in HB 1152).</p>

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<b>Staff and logistical support, expenses</b>	<p>The steering committee shall receive staff and logistical support from the office of financial management.</p> <p>The bill doesn't mention Executive Director or paid administrative support, but the budget includes 2 FTEs.</p>	<p>Governor appoints exempt Executive Director. A half-time administrative assistant position is included in the budget; the Council is staffed with 1.5 FTEs.</p>
<b>Roles/Goals</b>	<p>Steering Committee:</p> <p>Shall appoint advisory committee members.</p> <p>Shall direct and coordinate the studies created in this bill (giving consideration to recently completed, related finance studies with particular attention to those initiated by or completed at the request of the legislature)</p> <p>Shall develop recommendations based on the studies directed and coordinated.</p> <p>Shall develop recommendations about how the state can best provide stable funding for student learning for young children, students in public schools, and students in the public colleges and universities</p> <p>May enter into contracts as needed to support the work of the study.</p>	<p>Early Learning Council:</p> <p>Goal is to build on upon existing efforts and recommend new initiatives, as necessary, to create an adequately financed, high quality, accessible, and comprehensive early learning system that benefits all young children whose parents choose it.</p> <p>Shall develop an early learning plan to improve the organization of early learning programs and services at the state level, and improve accessibility and quality of programs and services throughout the state.</p> <p>The council shall monitor and measure its progress and regularly report to the governor and legislature on its progress, findings and recommendations.</p> <p>The council shall make use of existing reports, research, planning efforts and programs.</p>

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<b>Specific charges</b>	<p><b>Early Learning:</b> A comprehensive study of early learning shall include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>Defining the populations served, those that could be served, and program access;</p> <p>Determining the state's role in supporting quality early learning opportunities;</p> <p>Determining the state's role in training service providers;</p> <p>Providing for smooth transitions to K-12 programs.</p> <p><b>K-12</b></p> <p><b>General Finance and Policy Background</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the constitutional and legal requirements of the K-12 finance system and how those requirements are affected by education reform efforts to provide all students with the opportunity to achieve the state standards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Financial Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify strengths and weaknesses of the current K-12 funding system and consider how local school districts use the funding provided to meet state requirements and student learning goals.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council's work will include:</p> <p>Developing an early learning plan to improve the organization of early learning programs and services and to improve accessibility and quality of early learning programs and services;</p> <p>Recommendations to the governor and legislature concerning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of current populations being served and potential populations to be served by early learning programs and services;</li> <li>The state's role in supporting quality early learning programs and services;</li> <li>Appropriate levels and sources of stable and sustainable funding to meet statewide and local needs for early learning programs and services, including public-private partnerships;</li> <li>Changes in existing early learning programs and services, including their administration, to improve their efficiency, effectiveness and quality;</li> <li>Changes in programs and service to ensure content is aligned with what children need to know and be able to do upon entering school;</li> <li>How to maximize available early learning resources to ensure children are receiving continuity of care; and</li> <li>Providing for smooth transitions from early learning programs and services to K-12 programs.</li> </ul>

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Specific charges (continued)	<p><b>Financial Analysis (continued)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review K-12 finance systems in at least five other states.</li> <li>• Identify efficiencies in district spending practices.</li> <li>• Consider local and regional funding challenges faced by individual school districts throughout the state.</li> <li>• Identify potential changes to the current salary system that would be more closely related to professional development and enhancement of student performance.</li> <li>• Identify potential changes to the current K-12 finance system including recommendations on the amount of funding and how that funding would be distributed and consideration of how these changes would impact student achievement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Policy Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assure program accountability.</li> <li>• Improve effectiveness in state-level governance.</li> <li>• Provide programs that assist students in meeting standards.</li> <li>• Help students stay in school.</li> <li>• Improve the effectiveness of instruction for students who are learning English as a second language.</li> <li>• Consider impacts of the certification requirements for teachers.</li> <li>• Identify appropriate preparation requirements for paraeducators.</li> </ul>	<p>Quality improvements to licensed child care through development of (1) a voluntary, quality-based graduated rating system to provide information to parents about program quality and to provide resources and incentives to improve quality, and (2) a tiered-reimbursement system for state-subsidized child care to improve quality of care for children in state-funded care; and</p> <p>Recommendations to the governor and legislature concerning regulation of child care, including care that is exempt from regulation and unlicensed care that is subject to regulation.</p>

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Specific charges (continued)	<p>HIGHER EDUCATION</p> <p>Fiscal issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine options for creating a new funding system</li> <li>• Examine methods of determining the cost of instruction for various programs</li> <li>• Identify appropriate shares of the cost of instruction for tuition, state subsidies, and financial aid</li> <li>• Identify costs associated with increasing access to BA degrees</li> <li>• Identify options for coordinating higher education capital and operating budgets</li> <li>• Review higher education governance as it relates to fiscal policies</li> </ul> <p>Enrollment issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the number and type of enrollments needed to meet demographic and work force training needs</li> <li>• Identify enrollment distribution patterns throughout the higher education system needed to meet demographic and workforce training needs</li> <li>• Recommend strategies for increasing BA degree opportunities</li> <li>• Identify options for using enrollment capacity at independent colleges and universities</li> </ul>	

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Specific charges (continued)	<p><b>Transition issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine ways to provide smooth transitions from high school to college. For instance, by ensuring adequate preparation for college course work and increasing dual credit options for high school students</li> <li>Create a common transfer and articulation plan for community colleges and baccalaureate institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Research issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify incentives to optimize research conducted by public higher education institutions</li> <li>Identify research that, if conducted by Washington public higher education institutions, will stimulate the economy and address social issues</li> </ul>	
Statutory Deadlines	<p><i>November 15, 2005</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interim report to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature. Report may recommend possible action items for consideration in the 2006 legislative session.</li> </ul> <p><i>June 16, 2006</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interim report to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature.</li> </ul> <p><i>November 15, 2006</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final report to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature.</li> </ul>	<p><i>November 15, 2005</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations to the governor and legislature concerning statewide organization of early learning.</li> </ul> <p><i>December 1, 2005</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial development of voluntary, quality-based rating system completed.</li> <li>Initial development of tiered-reimbursement system completed.</li> </ul> <p><i>March 30, 2006</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSHS to begin implementation of Council's tiered-reimbursement system in two pilot sites (subject to appropriation).</li> </ul>

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Statutory Deadlines (continued)		<p><i>December 1, 2006</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete development of voluntary, quality-based rating system.</li> <li>• Complete development of tiered-reimbursement system. Implement tiered-reimbursement system statewide (subject to appropriation).</li> </ul> <p><i>January 1, 2007</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit voluntary, quality-based rating system to the governor and fiscal and policy committees of the legislature.</li> </ul>
Expiration date	Act expires July 1, 2007.	<p>Sections 1 through 6, provisions regarding the Council, expire July, 2007.</p> <p>(Section 7 provides for tiered reimbursement initial implemented by March 30<sup>th</sup> 2006. The remainder of the bill repeals RCW provisions that established the child care coordinating committee and do not require an expiration date.)</p>